

Monroe County Community School Corporation  
**BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES**  
Regular Meeting, Tuesday, October 20, 2009

**MINUTES**

The Board of School Trustees of the Monroe County Community School Corporation met in a regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 20, 2009, in the Large Group Room at Bloomington High School South, 1965 South Walnut Street, Bloomington.

Board members present:

Jeannine Butler	President
Valerie Merriam	Vice President
Vicki Streiff	Secretary
Jim Muehling	Member
Lois Sabo-Skelton	Member
Sue Wanzer	Member

Board member absent:

John Hamilton	Assistant Secretary
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Also present:

J.T. Coopman	Superintendent
Tim Thrasher	Comptroller
Peggy Chambers	Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Personnel
Mike Scherer	Director of Extended Services
Janet Tupper	Administrative Assistant
Andy Graham	Reporter for <i>The Herald-Times</i>

In addition to the above, four (4) citizens signed the visitors list, which is made a part of the official record of this meeting, and two representatives of Bloomington Community Access TV were present.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Board President, Jeannine Butler, called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

2. **FACES OF EDUCATION**

Dr. Butler explained that the Faces of Education recipient was ill and unable to attend the meeting. He will be honored at the next regular meeting on November 3, 2009.

3. **PUBLIC DIALOGUE** – There was no response to Dr. Butler’s invitation for public dialogue.

4. **SUPERINTENDENT’S COMMENTS**

In his report to the Board, Superintendent J.T. Coopman shared information about ongoing professional development opportunities, including one for 89 teachers and 11 administrators for ELL (English Language Learners) training. He gave special credit to Choonhyun Jeon, ELL Coordinator, for his leadership and for providing this research-based training.

Dr. Coopman thanked Jeff Jones and staff from Solution Tree and Tina Peterson, MCCS Foundation Executive Director, for their support in bringing Dr. Robert Barr to our district on October 13. Dr. Barr worked with staff during the day and held a community forum that evening.

Following up on previous discussions, Dr. Coopman proposed that strategic planning begin in February. He suggested bringing in a representative from AdvancED (the unified organization of the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement [NCA CASI]) to talk about a strategic plan model for the school district.

Board members had prepared a letter in support of public education and to express their concern regarding the proposal made by State Superintendent Tony Bennett in relationship to revising rules for teacher preparation and licensure. Dr. Coopman said the letter is available for public review and will be forwarded to School Board members throughout the state, asking others to make their concerns known at the state level if they agree. A copy of the letter will be accessible via a link on the school system's website: [www.mccsc.edu](http://www.mccsc.edu). He reported that the Department of Education will hold public hearings on October 27, 29 and November 2 and details can be found at [www.doe.in.gov](http://www.doe.in.gov).

Ms. Wanzer noted that Anna Lynch, parent, has been following School Board meetings and she has circulated to PTO presidents information on REPA (Rule Revisions for Educator Preparation and Accountability). She has made presentations at Templeton, University and Fairview; this is a parent who has always been interested in what is going on in education and this kind of input is so valuable to the school system. She said Ms. Lynch could not be present so she was sharing on her behalf.

5. **CONSENT AGENDA**

Mr. Muehling moved approval of the consent agenda as presented, including: (a) donations and ECA expenditures; and (b) allowance of claims. Ms. Merriam seconded the motion.

Dr. Coopman reviewed donations and ECA expenditures. Dr. Butler commended Glenda and Patrick Murray for their regular donations to Fairview. Following a time for additional discussion, Board members voted on the motion. Aye: Butler, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

6. **CONTRACTS**

Mr. Thrasher recommended approval of contracts as presented, including: Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Target Volunteers School Library Makeover, and Change Orders for the Hoosier Hills Career Center project. Mr. Muehling so moved. Dr. Sabo-Skelton seconded the motion. Aye: Butler, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

7. **PERSONNEL**

Ms. Chambers recommended approval of the Personnel Report as presented. Ms. Merriam so moved. Mr. Muehling seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Aye: Butler, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

8. **AWARD CONTRACT FOR PRACTICE SOCCER FIELD UPGRADE AT BHS SOUTH**

Ms. Merriam moved that the Board award a contract for \$41,650 to low bidder Stanger Excavation to complete improvements at the BHS South practice soccer field. Ms. Wanzer seconded the motion.

During discussion, Mr. Scherer said they are waiting on some permits to finish this project. Mr. Muehling asked about lights at the BHS North soccer field. Mr. Scherer will check the status and get a response to the Board.

There was no further discussion. Aye: Butler, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

9. **FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION: Revise Calendar for the 2010-2011 School Year**

Dr. Coopman shared with the Board three drafts of calendars with different start dates. He said these drafts were provided to the teachers association and principals and now to the Board for feedback. The Board reviewed and discussed these calendar options for the 2010-2011 school year. One option is similar to the current school year calendar with teachers returning on August 9 and the semester ending at winter break. The other two options propose later starting dates (August 23 and August 16) with the semester ending two weeks after winter break.

During discussion, some concern was expressed for not ending the semester at winter break, even though students would return from break two weeks before final exams. One Board member heard parents say they wanted to start school later because it cut their vacations short. Another Board member noted it would be helpful to align more with Indiana University but it was explained that the university does not have a mandated 180 days of instruction; it is impossible to start and end on the same dates. A recommendation has not been received from the Discussion Council.

When public comment was invited, speaking as a parent Andy Graham said it is academically much better for kids to take exams before winter break. He said he did not understand parent comments about cutting vacation short when they could start vacations earlier. He said he is concerned about what is best for kids academically. He added that he is a proponent of year-round school and he thinks starting earlier is fine.

10. **FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION: Recent News Articles**

Dr. Coopman provided copies of two news articles of interest to the Board and the public. One published October 11, 2009, “Governor’s education primer,” reports that Governor Daniels discloses ‘The Bell Curve’ author altered his views on schools. The other article is one written by a Muncie teacher about the debate over the new teacher-licensing proposal REPA (Rule Revisions for Educator Preparation and Accountability).

Board members joined Ms. Merriam in voicing concern about the fact that the Education Roundtable was meant to bring contrary views to work toward a common goal but that is not happening. Also, the Board is concerned that we are teaching that all children can learn and “The Bell Curve” philosophy says the opposite. As requested by the Board, both articles will be linked from the school system’s home web page: [www.mccsc.edu](http://www.mccsc.edu).

11. **FOR DISCUSSION: Procedure for Appointing School Board Member for District 5**

Dr. Butler noted that Board member John Hamilton submitted his resignation effective October 31 and the Board has 30 days to fill the vacancy. Applications for the position are due November 1. She said one application has been received and two others have expressed interest. She shared with Board members a list of interview questions that was used in 2008. Board members will review and share feedback for development of an interview instrument for this appointment. Following discussion

regarding timelines and individual calendar obligations, the Board agreed to meet in executive session to develop a list of applicants at 10:00 a.m. on November 5; conduct interviews in a work session on November 19 and appoint a new member at a special meeting on November 24. The new member will take the oath of office at a regular meeting on December 1.

It was noted that the new member must reside in District 5, which includes voting precincts Perry 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 11, 14, 16, 28, 32 and Bloomington 1. The Application, Board Bylaws and a map of District 5 are linked from the school system's homepage [www.mccsc.edu](http://www.mccsc.edu)

12. **INFORMATION, PROPOSALS OR COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC** – There was no response to Dr. Butler's invitation for comments from the public.

13. **COMMITTEE REPORTS AND PROPOSALS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**

In response to a question, Dr. Coopman said things are in place to begin the H1N1 vaccinations for our students as soon as the medication is received. Ms. Wanzer said the city asked the county and city to team up. She said Daniel Rademacher (MCCSC Health Services Director) has done a wonderful job; she is sorry the two entities did not include the school system in this team effort.

Ms. Merriam reported that at a recent Comprehensive Health Issues Committee (CHIC) meeting, Dr. (James) Laughlin (School Physician) talked about concussions experienced in athletics and the aftermath and he said what we are doing now is good. Every student who participates in a contact sport is taking a cognitive test before and after playing. She said at Southern Pediatrics they are learning that some students are not ready to go back to class as soon as they thought because stimulation of the school setting interferes with readiness.

Ms. Merriam commended various student groups for outstanding performances. She said she talked to an early childhood class at Indiana University about responsibilities and REPA and the way the government has appointed a committee that will vote on REPA, i.e. that it will be passed regardless of comments they receive. She said she will ask the state for a copy of all comments that have been made; she believes that at least 90% of the comments will be negative.

Ms. Wanzer commented on Dr. Robert Barr's presentation on October 13. She said he was a humorous speaker who told us we do not need to whine about our situation; we cannot allow our detractors to define us. She said today she went to a Democratic Women's Group meeting and heard representatives from Martha's House talk about their situation. She said no matter how dire our budget situation, others are worse off and they are still providing services.

Ms. Wanzer said it is really exciting to hear from our curriculum people about what they are doing with staff development. She said she is excited to be where we are and to know we can move forward and to leverage support with other organizations; by working together we can increase our resources.

Mr. Muehling thanked Fairview and the administrative staff for information (on Fairview Artful Learning and professional development) shared at the work session. He noted that the school system received \$5200/student state support for students enrolled in the school system on the official count day in September. Likewise, The Project School receives money for students enrolled there on the official count day. He explained that even if kids come back to the school system, the state support stays with The Project School. He mentioned that those who promote alternatives talk about money following students and this is a good example of why that should happen.

Noting that the Chamber of Commerce Franklin Initiative Educator of the Year Awards will be held on November 12, Mr. Muehling congratulated Board President Jeannine Butler who will be receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award. Outstanding Educator Awards will be given to: Peggy Chambers – Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources & Personnel; Lauren Copeland – Social Studies Teacher at BHS North; Robert Courtney – Social Studies Teacher at Jackson Creek; Sheri Curry – Art Teacher at Clear Creek; Kevin Gallagher and Rise Reinier – K-6 Team Teachers at Templeton; Diane Hanks – Assistant Principal at Tri-North; Greg Mongold – Math Teacher at BHS North; Linda Plaford – Speech and Language Pathologist. He also extended congratulations to Sara McQueen, Art Teacher at Jackson Creek, who recently was awarded the Middle School Art Educator of the Year for the State of Indiana. Board members joined Mr. Muehling in this commendation.

Mr. Muehling announced that Board officers will be elected in January; he invited other Board members to provide him with nominations for officers to serve during 2011.

Dr. Sabo-Skelton thanked her colleagues for the letter prepared addressing concerns about proposed teacher licensure changes. She said they will continue to speak out and to work; she said right now the Governor and State Superintendent for Instruction are not doing the best for our kids. She added that this letter will be sent around the state to other School Boards and a copy will be delivered to Mr. (Andy) Graham at *The Herald-Times*.

Dr. Butler said one of the Superintendent's appointees to the school system insurance committee will be a Board member. She suggested that if a Board member is interested in serving on this committee, he/she should contact Peggy Chambers.

Dr. Butler shared a plaque the Board received from the Indiana School Boards Association (ISBA) for achievement as an outstanding School Board because of attendance at professional meetings sponsored by ISBA.

#### 14. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Dr. Butler declared the meeting to be adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

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Jeannine Butler, President

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Valerie Merriam, Vice President

ABSENT

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Victoria I. Streiff, Secretary

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John Hamilton, Assistant Secretary

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Jim Muehling, Member

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Lois Sabo-Skelton, Member

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Susan P. Wanzer, Member